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26 SEP 1955

DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77  
 Auth: DDA REG. 77/1763

Date: 07/03/77 By:

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)  
 Deputy Director (Plans)  
 Deputy Director (Support)

SUBJECT: Area Training Development

1. The Language and External Training School (LETS) is now developing the first of a series of area training courses. These courses are to sharpen the appreciation of DDI, DDP, and DDS personnel for what is professionally significant in the foreign environment on which their respective missions are focussed. The urgent need for such training has been indicated in various recent reports on intelligence activities, and I am sure you will share my gratification that we can now begin to overcome what has obviously been a serious handicap for a great many of our people.

2. It is desired to tailor the substance and slant of this area training to the actual needs of the various categories of intelligence personnel for whom it is being created. Your office is invited to assist us in the definition of aims and substance, thus helping us make these courses as useful as possible to personnel under your supervision.

3. It is suggested, therefore, that you designate one or more senior officers to serve as members of an ad hoc Advisory Planning Committee. It would be desirable to utilize mature area specialists qualified by advanced academic specialization in area and language and by extensive area experience. The Chief, Language and External Training School, has designated Mr.  to serve as Coordinator for Area Training Development and as Chairman of the proposed committee.

4. Attached herewith are working papers designed to provide a basis for initiating discussion of essentials pertaining to the development of courses and programs. It is emphasized that the specifications contained in these drafts are strictly tentative and subject to as extensive modification as may seem desirable in the light of recommendations by the committee. It is suggested that these drafts be transmitted to the officer, or officers, designated by you to serve with the committee.

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SUBJECT: Area Training Development

5. If you desire to participate in this planning, will you kindly notify me of the person(s) who will represent your component. Mr.  then will communicate directly with them.

~~SECRET~~

MATTHEW BAIRD  
Director of Training

(copy of attachments not  
included for DTR file -  
copies may be obtained  
from Ltr.)

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AREA TRAINING PROGRAM:

PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

Courses: The Language and External Training School (LETS) is beginning to develop courses (see model syllabi) on all foreign areas with intelligence significance for the United States. These courses will fall within the following categories:

The Basic Country Survey - a course on each major country and on each grouping of two or more minor countries.

The Regional Survey - a course on each world region or broad grouping of countries.

The Current Problems Seminar - a discussion of intelligence problems, as appropriate, centering on a particular country or region.

The "Americans Abroad" course on each major country or appropriate grouping of countries.

The "Omnibus Program" of comprehensive training, including language, on an individual country or appropriate grouping of countries.

Need: CIA's entire mission is focussed on foreign developments and situations which spring from the actions of foreign peoples responding to their environments. Hence, in order to comprehend, anticipate, or utilize these actions, a sound knowledge of the people involved, as well as of the places and things about them, is indispensable.

Such knowledge is deficient of course particularly in Americans, who until recent years found less need than other major nations for foreign area and language studies. As a result, Americans in general have a marked

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tendency to evaluate and anticipate the responses of foreign peoples on the basis of purely American criteria.

25X1 In CIA, only a small percentage of the personnel concerned with a particular area are believed to possess the minimum of area knowledge or familiarity essential for efficient fulfillment of their assignments. Evidence of this fact was abundant among the 73 employees who took Professor [ ] courses on the Far East, sponsored by LETS, in the summer of 1955; he was astounded at the lack of basic knowledge of this area in many who had official responsibilities connected with it. Such deficiencies are widespread in CIA probably because: (1) functional rather than area knowledge and experience are most often the determining factor in hiring personnel; (2) those with area specializations must often be utilized on jobs unconcerned with those specializations; and (3) even when employees do hold positions utilizing their area specializations, such knowledge is seldom current or balanced enough, or sufficiently geared to intelligence needs, for efficient job performance.

Supervisors throughout the Agency have no trouble in recalling specific--and perhaps costly--instances of employees with such handicaps. The good administrator or the good operator is shifted to a desk or a field post where these special talents are urgently needed, but his ignorance of the area concerned cannot be overcome quickly enough to prevent serious errors of judgment and perhaps even the ruin of operations long-abuilding. The economist or the scientist who may be an outstanding authority in his technical field may nevertheless tend to over-generalize when an empirical

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study of a particular case is called for; that is, he may be entirely lacking in the area experience necessary to evaluate or handle specific data or people in a specific locale. A case or desk officer, though he has excellent experience on a given area, may be even more of a liability than the functionalist if he is shifted to another area since he tends to carry over from one area to the other institutional and cultural patterns which no longer apply.

Above all, the CIA employee going out to a foreign post must by the nature of his business fit into the new environment as smoothly as possible. In order to be unobtrusive and yet be in a position to promote American objectives, he must possess a broad knowledge of--and a sensitivity to--the area, which the proposed courses will go far to supply. While some CIA employees have lived a total of many years in the country to which they are assigned, few of even these employees are believed to have ever had systematic training on their areas, which their increasing job responsibilities demand. Heretofore, CIA as a young and growing organization has sent out most of its field employees without showing adequate concern for their area and language training. Correction of this deficiency has been enjoined on CIA by the Clark Committee report.

Objectives: LETS therefore seeks to develop gradually the area training courses which a large number of Agency personnel appear to need with varying degrees of urgency. The Basic Country and the Regional Survey courses, as well as the Area Problems Seminar, will be tailored to the general needs of

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DDI, DDP, and DDS personnel; the Americans Abroad courses and the Omnibus Program will serve specialized needs of those employees of the three major components, who are preparing to go to the area concerned.

By definition, then, these courses will go well beyond the standard academic country survey. History, people, institutions, geography, and climate will be concisely presented as only the framework for further specialized discussion. For the DDI employee, current conditions, trends, and attitudes will be highlighted to clarify the present intelligence situation or predictive problems. The student from the DDS will be alerted, for example, to special characteristics of the economy--in transportation, communications, food supply, price trends--which may affect his CIA job activities. The DDP employee will profit, for example, from attention to popular attitudes, racial composition of the population, governmental processes, and legal system.

For all who take the courses, the goal will be to develop a sharper understanding of foreign areas and a greater skill in anticipating responses within them. In short, the aim is to develop a keener sensitivity to what is professionally significant in foreign areas, for effective intelligence work either within them or concerning them.

Intelligence-oriented area courses are not at present offered anywhere in the United States. For obvious security reasons they must be offered within an intelligence agency. They are being given increasing priority by a maturing CIA. With the relaxation of the cold war in the post-Geneva period, such courses are less of a luxury than before, and yet become

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more vital for the increasingly subtle, long-term struggle with the USSR for the confidence and support of foreign governments and populations.

Staff: In order to make the new area training program as efficient and realistic as possible, it is to be correlated closely with language training and administered by a staff which will tend toward bi-competency. Thus, under a proposed reorganization of LETS, the existing language training program will be coordinated with the new area program under three regional groups: The Western, The Slavic, and The Oriental. This arrangement for pooling talents should maximize LETS capabilities for providing coherent --and long-neglected--training on foreign peoples and their environments. In addition, experienced personnel from the DDI, DDP, and DDS will be invited as appropriate to lead discussions of the relationships of area considerations to their respective missions.

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MODEL SYLLABUS

BASIC COUNTRY SURVEY COURSE

1. Scope. The Basic Country Survey course examines all principal facets of a foreign country and its people in the light of American intelligence interests. Minor countries are grouped appropriately for convenience--e.g., Scandinavia, Arab countries, Pakistan with India, Portugal with Spain, French North Africa.

2. Objectives. The purpose of the course is strictly professional--to develop a sensitivity to what is significant in the foreign country from an intelligence viewpoint. The employee is alerted to those aspects of its physical make-up, traditions, attitudes, and current conditions which affect his work. Thus he is trained more effectively to interpret developments, anticipate responses, and promote CIA operational objectives in the country.

3. Users. The course is intended for all intelligence officers whose assignments are concerned with the country to be studied. The course is slanted toward the professional needs of personnel engaged in intelligence production, operations, or services. Certain unclassified portions of the course may be available also to adult dependents.

4. Content. The course consists of three main phases. The first includes: (a) a sketch of why the country is important to the United States; (b) a broad consideration of American policy toward the country concerned and toward the world region in which it falls; and (c) specific consideration of American policy toward the country concerned and toward

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the world region in which it falls; and (c) specific consideration of national intelligence objectives and--as security factors permit--of operational objectives involving the country. The second and most extensive phase of the course is a systematic study of the country itself in considerable detail. The principal topics are: a brief historical introduction to the people, their culture, and their institutions; the geography, climate, and natural resources; the economic structure, with emphasis on strengths and weaknesses of manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, trade, and national accounts; current political, economic, and social conditions, and institutions and organizations, the structure of government, with emphasis on government policies in these fields; legal and constitutional systems; attitudes and policies toward the outside world, with emphasis on the country's role in the cold war. The third phase of the course relates the second directly to the first by synthesizing and evaluating those area data which bear importantly on efforts to implement American policies and intelligence objectives in the area. This phase will be taken up intermittently, as appropriate, after each segment of the second phase. The course concludes with a balanced survey of the intelligence situation in the country--i.e., the current status of, and the outlook for, progress toward American goals in the country.

5. Schedules. Classes will meet four times a week, in two-hour sessions, for ten weeks. Outside study and preparation will normally require about sixteen hours a week. The initial Basic Country Survey Course--on  is expected to be offered by late fall of 1955. As soon as staffing

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is completed, the course on each key country

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will normally be given at least once each year. Courses on lesser countries or groups of countries will be offered only once in two or three years.

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MODEL SYLLABUS

REGIONAL SURVEY COURSE

1. Scope. The Regional Survey course examines all principal facets of a world region, considered as a whole and in the light of American intelligence interests.

2. Objectives. The purpose of the course is strictly professional--to develop a sensitivity to what is significant in the region as a whole, from an intelligence viewpoint. The employee is alerted to those aspects of its physical make-up, traditions, attitudes, and current political, economic and military conditions which affect his work. He is trained to appraise the interplay of regional conditions and developments, and to observe their relation to and effect upon overall American strategy and intelligence objectives in the area. As a result, he becomes more skilled in interpreting developments, anticipating responses, and promoting CIA operational objectives of regional or national scope. In particular, the specialist on a single country or portion of the region is taught to place his problems in the proper perspective of overall regional policies and problems. He can also be expected to become better prepared for new job responsibilities, whether concerning other countries in the area or the region as a whole.

3. Users. The course is intended for intelligence officers whose assignments are concerned with the whole region to be studied, or any part thereof. The course is slanted toward the professional needs of personnel engaged in intelligence production, operations, or services. In general,

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applicants must possess a substantial level of basic knowledge of an important part of the region. Admission of those without such area competency, but with a pertinent functional specialty (e.g., economics, geography, political science, international relations), will be considered on an individual basis.

4. Content. The course consists of three main phases. The first includes: (a) a survey of why the region is important to the United States, with identification of the problems which stem from regional associations; (b) a broad consideration of American policy toward the region in the framework of American global strategy; and (c) specific consideration of national intelligence objectives and—as security factors permit—of operational objectives involving the region as a whole. The second and most extensive phase of the course is a systematic study of the region itself in considerable detail. The principal topics are: (a) a survey of the peoples, their historical relationships, their cultures, and their institutions, with the focus on factors promoting cohesion or division; (b) geography (terrain, waterways, etc.), climate and natural resources, as cohesive or divisive factors; (c) strengths and weaknesses, in the regional context, of the national economies, particularly with respect to manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, trade, and national accounts; (d) comparative political, economic, and social trends within the countries of the area and the interplay among them; (e) cooperative efforts and sources of friction among the countries; and (f) attitudes and policies of the major countries and of regional organizations toward regional problems and the outside world, with

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emphasis on the region's role in the cold war. The third phase of the course relates the second directly to the first by synthesizing and evaluating those data which bear importantly on efforts to implement American policies and intelligence objectives in the area. As far as possible this phase will be taken up intermittently as appropriate following each important segment of the second phase. The course concludes with a balanced survey of the intelligence situation concerning the region--that is, the current status of, and the outlook for, progress toward American goals in the region.

5. Schedules. Classes will meet four times a week, in two-hour sessions, for ten weeks. Outside study will normally require about sixteen hours a week. The initial Regional Survey courses--on the Middle East and Southeast Asia, respectively--are expected to be offered by late fall of 1955, with the course on Western Europe to follow in the spring of 1956. As soon as staffing is completed, the course on each world region will normally be given at least once each year.

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PROSPECTUS

CURRENT PROBLEMS SEMINAR

The first Current Problems Seminar will not be held until the Basic Country Surveys and Regional Surveys are well underway. It is suggested, therefore, that development of this stage of the program be deferred. Nevertheless, since this will be an integral part of, and perhaps the most challenging phase of the new Area Training Program, OTR wishes to alert Agency personnel to this later opportunity.

\* \* \* \*

The Current Problems Seminar will be designed to sharpen the skill of senior and junior analysts for attacking intelligence problems centered on a single country or region. Specifically, it will train CIA analysts to make the fullest possible utilization of area knowledge in accomplishing their missions.

Thus, the Seminar will pick up where a Basic Country Survey or a Regional Survey course leaves off, and help the analyst to develop his own sensitivity to the impact of area factors on current and future trends in the country or region. Emphasis will be placed on member participation in discussions of area characteristics which should be brought to bear on actual intelligence problems.

Each Seminar will consider both the current intelligence and the predictive aspects of such problems. Thus it will first focus on current events and trends affecting a given problem, and on what these mean in terms of

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present American security interests. Subsequently, it will turn to the estimative phase, that is, to probable future developments on the problem, together with an evaluation of what these are likely to mean for American security.

A Seminar will normally have two leaders, one with current intelligence and the other with estimative intelligence experience. They should have extensive experience on the area involved, considerable graduate training, and sufficient imagination for the task at hand. Participants should number about twelve.

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MODEL SYLLABUS

"AMERICANS ABROAD" COURSE

1. Scope. The Americans Abroad course examines major personal problems distinctive to a particular foreign country, which can be anticipated by CIA personnel planning to go there.

2. Objectives. The purpose of the course is mainly professional—to alert the employee to specific area characteristics which might: (a) cause him personal difficulties or embarrassment as either a U. S. Government or a CIA employee; or (b) be utilized to personal advantage for the better performance of his official duties. This course is intended to fill a need which is not being met by either the Department of State or other components of CIA. Briefings presently available to outgoing personnel concentrate on the general problems of all concerned—with only slight attention to area characteristics—or on the mechanics rather than the challenge of new ideas connected with foreign travel or residence. Furthermore, present facilities are not open to all outgoing CIA personnel.

3. Users. Phases one and two of this course (see para. 4) are intended for all Agency employees who are planning to go to the country concerned within the foreseeable future. Adult dependents may be admitted to certain unclassified portions of these phases. Phase three is intended exclusively for personnel of the EDP.

4. Content. The course consists of three main phases. The first is a brief survey of the physical differences (e.g., climate, transportation, accommodations, customs) to expect upon entering the country concerned. The second is a brief presentation of its government's policies as well as of

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official and unofficial attitudes toward the United States and toward Americans in the country, from the viewpoint of how these may affect the employee personally. The third phase, which takes up approximately half of the total class hours, is a follow-up on the second, emphasizing special personal problems encountered by American intelligence personnel in the line of duty in the country concerned. It is based on the personal field experiences of CIA personnel, who are invited as appropriate to lead the discussions. As security considerations permit, these discussions get down to specific cases with which either the group leaders or the members of the classes are familiar. In view of the wide variations in the security considerations, as well as in the personal experiences and professional interests involved in these discussions, no uniform pattern of course content for this phase can be established.

5. Schedules. According to student demand, classes meet either: (a) once a week, in a two-hour session, for ten weeks; or (b) five times a week, in a half-day session, for a single week. Under the first of these alternatives, this course runs concurrently with the corresponding Basic Country Survey course for the convenience of those wishing to take a full-time Omnibus Program on the country concerned.

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Talked w/ Phyllis re the above who  
assured me that Mr. [redacted] was taking  
copies to all THOs to a meeting.

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